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THE US NAVY AND NATIONAL STRATEGY IN EAST ASIA: AN OUTLOOK  
FOR THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

by

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Abstract of

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This paper explores how the US Navy serves the national strategy in East Asia, and what the future may hold for the Navy continuing to do so for the next twenty-five years. The paper concentrates on the peacetime, political role of the Navy, and does not specifically address the Navy's wartime missions.

The paper finds that the Navy serves the national strategy and the objectives it supports, very well. But as the world becomes multipolar and more interdependent, the military, that is the Navy, will have to used in conjunction with nonmilitary policy instruments in order to continue to achieve given objectives. In this regard, the paper concludes that the future does not look promising. US policy coordination appears poorly managed within the government, with potentially destabilizing results.

In a time of diminishing threats and budget deficits, the nation must be careful what naval forces are cut in the Pacific. Cuts taken for budgetary rather than strategic reasons may end up costing the nation more when it is required to reestablish stability and the balance of power.

## PREFACE

I embarked on this paper for three reasons: first, I have always been interested in the 'political' uses of military force, i.e., the use of the military to accomplish national goals and objectives short of going to war. Secondly, I have had fleet experience in the Pacific for over ten years and wanted to learn more about what the non-crisis issues were within the theater. And, thirdly, I have read and heard much about the dawning of the "Pacific Century" and wanted to see if, and how, this would relate to the Navy's peacetime missions.

Prior to undertaking this paper, I had served a tour in the Political-Military Policy and Current Plans Division on the Navy Staff in Washington. I was, therefore, comfortable with the subject before I began, although my previous expertise was in European and Soviet affairs.

One of the most critical parts of the paper discusses the importance of the perceptions of the East Asians, the nations who are most positively affected by US naval presence in the region. Thus, my bibliography shows an almost equal distribution of material written by Asians as by "Westerners." These opinions were then melded into my own thinking about the strategic situation in the region.

Four of my interviews were extremely helpful in viewing the region in a global perspective. The interviewees were

positive about the accomplishments of the US in the region, but agreed to varying degrees that a strategic review was necessary, given the rapidly changing world situation and the US budget crisis. These interviews were with former CNO Admiral Thomas Hayward, retired Rear Admiral Bill Cockell, Rear Admiral Bill Pendley (CINCPAC J-5) and Captain Jim Giblin, the Head, Strategic Plans, Policy and Policy Programs at CINCPACFLT.

The paper expresses many of my personal opinions on the situation in the region today and is by no means merely a review of the subject material. In fact, the references were mainly cited for the gaps they filled in my understanding of the situation.

I believe one of the most important points to be taken from the paper is what the Navy has accomplished for peace, stability and the achievement of national objectives. This is balanced, however, by what I believe to be a general lack of domestic understanding of the issues, which may undercut the US position of accepted leadership and result in a destabilization of the region. I strongly feel that the US must, therefore, make a concerted effort to articulate the national regional strategy and objectives; this must not been done so with the Soviet Union as the main backdrop.

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# THE US NAVY AND NATIONAL STRATEGY IN EAST ASIA: AN OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research paper is to examine what American interests and objectives in the Western Pacific and East Asia are likely to be over the next twenty-five years and to examine how US seapower can best serve those national interests.

Accordingly, one of the primary objectives of the paper is to articulate how seapower translates national objectives into an appropriate national strategy. Another important objective is to place the current strategic situation into historical perspective. This will aid those who are contemplating changes in the US position to evaluate them in light of strategic precedents, American or otherwise.

This author's assumption, articulated within the paper, that US military power in East Asia has underwritten the peace and stability of that region today. The paper further argues that the United States presently finds itself in a unique position in the Far East: it is the acceptable guarantor of the balance of power and is credited by the Asians for its positive role in the region.

The military in general, and the Navy in particular, accomplishes several key military goals in East Asia, which preserve stability and the balance of power by being present in sizeable, and therefore, militarily credible numbers. The four US regional goals are: keep regional disputes in check, obviate the need for regional military expansion, prevent external problems from destabilizing the balance of power, and prevent the Soviet Union from disrupting the balance of power.

Although militarily-oriented, the goals above are pursued for purposes other than strictly military ends. Rather, their purposes are in "the broadest sense political, involving . . . the maintenance or enhancement of the state's position in the world."<sup>2</sup>

But in a world increasingly interdependent, the Navy alone is not capable of accomplishing the objectives of the United States in East Asia: it must be viewed as but only one of several policy instrument. In this context, this paper will also examine the following nonmilitary policy instruments: trade and economic policy; diplomacy; security assistance; and arms control. A major conclusion of this paper is that the use of US policy instruments is not very coordinated and seem, at times, to be at cross-purposes.

The negative upshot of this is that some instruments, trade policy, for example, have the potential to undermine the positive accomplishments of naval presence in East Asia. The

US must recognize that all strategic tools, or policy instruments, must be used in concert. If they are not, the result could be an undermining of the US's ability to accomplish its objectives in East Asia. In other words, the Navy would be less able to serve its political purposes, and, thus, would be less able to maintain or enhance the US position in the region.

#### SEAPOWERS AND STRATEGY

Formulation of long-range strategy requires consideration of a number of elements. First, a sound understanding of history allows the strategist to construct a framework for interpreting the reasons for past actions. The use of history as a decision making tool is, however, a dual-edged sword. Some interpreters want to apply every lesson and nuance to a current situation without looking for or recognizing the differences between the old and the new. Others see no historical parallel at all and as such refuse to learn the lessons, and more importantly the mistakes, of those who went before. The best way to use history is to not only learn why certain decisions were made and what the results were, but to also look at what the results might have been if an alternate path had been taken.

Necessary for this historical interpretation is a solid grasp of the objectives a nation hoped to achieve by its

actions. These objectives must then be examined to determine whether they were long-range in scope or merely situationally oriented. Next, the strategist must understand the present; an understanding of the current strategic picture is essential because it determines whether a course of consistency or change should be pursued. The current situation must, therefore, be balanced against the known or presumed national objectives.

One of the first responsibilities for a strategist looking into the role of seapower in East Asia for the next twenty-five years is to explore the relationship between sea power and national objectives. Sea power does not exist for its own purposes, but rather is only one of several instruments of policy which are employed in pursuit of national political objectives.<sup>3</sup>

A secondary task for the strategist is to differentiate between the various forms of seapower. Sea power can be thought of as falling into one of three broad functional areas: Nuclear deterrence; sea control and power projection; and naval presence.<sup>4</sup> The strategic deterrence mission is generally fulfilled by Fleet Ballistic Missile submarines and to a lesser extent by surface ships and submarines which carry the nuclear-armed land attack version of the Tomahawk cruise missile.

The sea control and power projection missions are the Navy's traditional combat missions.

The naval presence mission is the one with which this paper is most concerned, that is, the role of seapower "as the earnest of US political involvement" in East Asian security affairs.<sup>5</sup>

The nuclear deterrence and sea control/power projection missions are the ones which traditionally drive naval force requirements, construction and acquisition programs. The "presence" mission has no program sponsor or budget. Consequently, there appears to be little understanding of the concept of naval presence as an active instrument of national policy. It is no wonder then, as will be elaborated later, that most Asian leaders have a much better grasp of the role of US seapower as a stabilizing force in East Asia than do the vast majority of US naval officers.<sup>6</sup>

#### US OBJECTIVES

The United States has deep historical roots in East Asia and the Western Pacific: it has been actively involved in the region for nearly 140 years, commencing with Commodore Perry's opening of Japan with the demand that the Japanese open their markets or suffer the consequences in 1853. From this bold beginning, the US has formulated and pursued a set of

national objectives, which have well served its political, security, and economic interests in East Asia. These objectives have remained consistent for over 100 years and are balance of power oriented. The objectives are:

1. to maintain or restore stability;
2. to maintain or restore an acceptable balance of power;
3. to achieve and maintain a position of accepted political leadership; and
4. to promote free trade.<sup>7</sup>

Pursuit of these objectives has been evident in many American diplomatic and security actions in the region since the late 19th Century: Hawaii was annexed in 1889 in order to counter the German occupation of Samoa; a "forward" US position was established in the Philippines at the close of the Spanish-American war in 1898; balance of power reasoning was behind the "Open Door" policy in China in 1900; was the basis of Theodore Roosevelt's concerns about potential Japanese hegemony in East Asia; it also played a large part in the formulation of the American negotiating position at the Washington Disarmament Conference in 1921-22<sup>8</sup>; balance of power was on Franklin Roosevelt's mind when he embargoed oil and scrap exports to Japan in 1941 -- an event which lead to World War II in the Pacific; and, finally, concerns for the East Asian balance of power to a great extent underpinned America's decisions to go to war in Korea and Vietnam.

## EAST ASIA AND GEOSTRATEGY

### CHAPTER II

The East Asia of 1990 is vastly different from that which existed in 1945: in that year it was a largely devastated area torn by five or more years of war. Today it enjoys the most dynamic economic growth rates in the entire world. Led by Japan and the four "Little Dragons"--Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea--the East Asians have swiftly and dramatically expanded their global market share of products ranging from automobiles to semiconductors.<sup>1</sup>

It is widely acknowledged, both in the Far East and the United States, that the economic miracle of East Asia is largely due to peace and stability in the region; by not having to be preoccupied with external threats has allowed the East Asians to concentrate on the business of nation building and industrial growth and modernization.<sup>2</sup> These East Asian nations also concede that the peace and stability which has made this all possible has been mainly underwritten by US military presence.

Since 1945 the United States has achieved its four objectives in East Asia by almost exclusive reliance on military presence, with the Navy being the preeminent military service in East Asia in 1990. With the exception of nearly

30,000 Army troops in South Korea, the great majority of US forces in the East Asian region are either air or maritime forces. Even among the latter, the Navy is preeminent because it is not tied to fixed air fields and support facilities; it is also unrivaled because of its flexibility, mobility, and relative self-sustainability. The emphasis on naval forces, therefore, reflects both the geography and scale of the region. Except for Laos, every state in East Asia is either a littoral or island nation. The distances within the theater are daunting and tend to constrain operations to some extent. For example, it is 3,300 miles from Hawaii to Guam and another 1,500 miles on to the Philippines. It is 3,500 miles from Japan to Hawaii and 3,000 plus miles from Tokyo to Singapore.<sup>3</sup>

Maritime forces are also preeminent because of the nature and diversity of perceived threats. South Korea is the only location within East Asia where any of the overt US commitments face any direct land-oriented threat. The remainder of the perceived threats are generally maritime in nature and therefore, the reliance on a maritime strategy to preserve stability and the balance of power is almost a given.

Additionally, unlike Europe where the Atlantic Alliance faces a monolithic Soviet threat, there is no such shared threat perception among Asians. For example, Indonesia and Thailand most fear Vietnam: Vietnam and China are historical

enemies; South Korea fears North Korea; and the US, China and Japan are opposed to Soviet expansion in the region.<sup>4</sup>

Because of its role as the guarantor of stability and balance, the US has adopted a strategy of flexibility within the region. The historical basis for this flexibility shows that the US has used its power in ways which it did not anticipate, such as the defense of Korea in 1950.

Accordingly, if one were to examine US forces throughout the region on a threat-by-threat basis one would probably feel that American forces were not well suited to any one of the tasks at hand. This approach, that of trying to meet all threats simultaneously, has long been abandoned as unaffordable and the US has adopted a posture of flexibility, which allows the US to deal with any one threat initially by trying to stabilize the situation until follow-on forces arrive at the scene.

The previous paragraph notwithstanding, US military forces in East Asia are more importantly linked to broader political and economic interests which resist simple analysis. Thus, the use of naval power to serve broader US interests and those of its regional allies and friends, poses strategic and operational problems. For the strategist these problems are compounded as they come at a time of growing domestic pressure for worldwide US force reductions. The growing debate about force structure is driven by the twin pressures of the US

budget deficit and the perception of a diminishing Soviet threat. There may be a reluctance to cut US forces in Europe until a clearer picture of negotiated force reductions emerges in order to preserve the US and allied negotiating positions. This may make Pacific forces more susceptible to force cuts in a time of budget cutting, a perceived diminishing threat, and the highly-charged rhetoric of a congressional election year.

Strong domestic pressure for force reductions will pose a true dilemma for American strategists. The first horn of the dilemma is how much to reduce the force structure in the East Asian region, and thus naval and military presence, to satisfy the Congress and the American public. The other horn of the dilemma is how to implement apparently inevitable force reductions without causing alarm within the region and thus giving the unintended perception that the US is abandoning its commitment to its four historical objectives. If handled correctly, the likely force cuts would not only satisfy the budget cutters, but would preserve US position as the acceptable guarantor of the East Asian balance of power. If not, the results could be utterly destabilizing and in no one's best long-term interests.

## NAVAL PRESENCE AND STABILITY

### CHAPTER III

As mentioned previously, the nations of the region perceive a wide array of threats on which there is no consensus; their fears are not based on ideology, but on more historically rooted distrust of their neighbors. Adhering to the recognized notion that my neighbor is my enemy, my neighbor once removed is my friend, most states are primarily concerned about their geographic neighbors. There are, however, two major exceptions to this rule. Based on their experiences in World War II, many East Asian nations still harbor fears of a militarily strong Japan. The Japanese, in turn, recognize this and tend, therefore, to restrain any overt and threatening drive for rearmament.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the US is widely regarded as the acceptable guarantor of the balance of power because of its non-hegemonic nature and its position as an extra-regional power.<sup>2</sup> Although most Asians recognize the legitimacy of the US claim as a Pacific power, it is still seen as a non-Asian nation which exerts leadership within the region for the apparent good of all. This is important when viewed relative to Asian concerns about a resurgent Japan because a US presence is seen as a barrier to renewed Japanese militarism.<sup>3</sup>

By performing several functions directly related to military concerns, the US Navy helps to achieve attainment of the four US objectives. These include, but are not limited to: keeping regional disputes in check; obviating the need for regional military growth; preventing external problems from destabilizing the balance of power; and, preventing the Soviet Union from playing any disruptive role at anyone else's expense.

Accomplishment of these objectives provides a solid foundation for the attainment of all four of the basic US objectives, which depend heavily on stability and peace. It also highlights the vital contributions which naval and military forces make to the US strategy in East Asia.

#### KEEPING REGIONAL DISPUTES IN CHECK

As previously mentioned, most antagonisms in East Asia are oriented toward bilateral animosities between neighbors. A closer look will also show that there are historically rooted differences between states which do not share common borders. For example, Japanese and South Korean differences go well beyond their competition in manufacturing and research. The Koreans have vivid memories of centuries of Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsula. In the 1970s the Koreans tended to see the Japanese as unappreciative of their efforts to stabilize the military situation in Korea. Not

unlike many Americans, the Koreans felt that Japan was getting a free ride on security issues and that they should start to do more for their own defense. But just as Japan has started to do more, especially their efforts to protect the sea and air space out to 1,000 miles, the Koreans began to worry about a militarily resurgent Japan.

Two other important relationships in East Asia center on China, whose relations with Japan and Taiwan are especially dependent on US policy in the region. The Chinese would be concerned if any improvements in Japanese military capability were not defensive in nature. Secondly, relations with Taiwan have been unpredictable and could lead to conflict if the Taiwanese see opportunities in the inevitable transition in Chinese leadership. US seapower plays a major role in these two sets of relationships as it obviates the need for any of the three nations to build large maritime forces in order to counter the other.

The US Navy is also important as a moderating force in bilateral or multilateral disputes over territorial claims and rights to sea bed resources. Examples include disputes between China and Vietnam over ownership of the Paracel Islands, claims of ownership of the Spratly Islands by Vietnam, Malaysia, China, and the Philippines and a dispute of ownership of the Nantuna Islands by Indonesia and Vietnam.<sup>4</sup>

This may be a difficult point to prove in the absolute, but the proof exists in the negative; it is reasonable to assume that the regional nations might have been more aggressive in pressing their claims if the US were not present. Its almost akin to Mine Warfare--you don't have to sink ships to be successful, you just have to prevent them from performing their mission.

#### OBVIATING THE NEED FOR MILITARY EXPANSION

Stability in East Asia depends on the attainment of the following two goals, which are both negative in their objectives. The first is to deter the Soviet Union from making any additional inroads into the area. The second is to prevent regional actors from unnecessarily expanding or improving their military capabilities. Achievement of both of these goals depends on the US, its regional military forces, and most importantly the credibility of its commitment to preserve the balance of power.<sup>5</sup>

Two plausible reasons can be assumed why any regional power would choose to build up its military enough to perceptibly alter the balance of power. The first reason would be a perception that the balance of power had already shifted at the expense of the US. Given the regions maritime orientation, this would be especially disconcerting to everyone in the region; this has to do not only with historical fears of countries like Japan, but the region's

perceptions of what constitutes an acceptable maritime balance of power. This interpretation of the maritime balance of power is different than the traditional understanding of a continental balance of power.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the American public is not familiar with the concepts of an acceptable maritime balance of power and its importance to US interests in East Asia. This point will be discussed later since a solid understanding, and acceptance, of the concept is necessary for the preservation of naval forces needed to support the US strategy in East Asia, a strategy firmly based on the attainment of the four objectives.

The second reason East Asian nations would likely undertake a military buildup would be to pursue a more independent security arrangement based on purely internal requirements and conceptions. For example, at some point Japan may find it necessary to sever its security links with the US, for a number of reasons easily imagined. The most likely of these would be over further disagreements on trade disputes made worse by US rhetoric about structural impediments to American imports and even more vociferous calls for more Japanese burdensharing.<sup>7</sup> Trade and economic issues really drive home the point: the military is but one of several instruments used to achieve a state's political objectives: the military must be used in concert with other instruments, such as diplomacy and trade policy, if it is to

be effective. Critics of Japan, for instance, must realize that there is a limit to how much criticism they will take before they find it in their interests to pursue a more independent national security policy. A more integrated approach, therefore, needs to be applied to the entire region in order to meet US objectives and to ensure nations do not destabilize the region by embarking on arms races.

#### NOT ALLOWING EXTERNAL PROBLEMS TO DESTABILIZE THE BALANCE OF POWER

The deployment of large US naval forces to the Indian Ocean beginning in the late 1970s was very alarming to the East Asians, particularly the Japanese. It vividly showed that the range of US global commitments could stretch naval forces in the Western Pacific dangerously thin. American ships deployed to the Indian Ocean in response to the seizure of the US Embassy in Teheran by militant Iranians. Nearly a decade later US operations in the North Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf again overstretched US naval forces in the Pacific, as these deployments were made in an effort to stabilize the worsening situation in the region caused by the Iran-Iraq war. The immediate and professed goal was to ensure the unimpeded flow of oil from the Gulf to overly dependent nations--Japan and Western Europe. And, although the Japanese were again somewhat alarmed at the drawdown of naval forces in

the Pacific, they were less concerned this time as they viewed the US actions in the Persian Gulf as in their own best interests.

The actions of the US Navy in the Persian Gulf achieved three politico-military results which should be exploited in order to strengthen America's position in East Asia. First, it demonstrated the credibility of the US commitment to the security of the East Asian region, even though the operation was out-of-area. Second, it allayed regional fears of Japanese military growth. And, lastly, it drove home the point to the Japanese that they need to do more for their own defense. These three positive outcomes of US action in the Persian Gulf are interrelated: they should only strengthen the leadership and acceptance of US presence in East Asia.

One positive outcome of America's Persian Gulf policy was how it enhanced the credibility of US defense commitments. Even though the action took place thousands of miles from Eastern Asia, it directly and positively affected that regions view of US credibility, because none of the oil-importing Asian nations, most notably Japan, have the capability to protect the sea lines of communication (SLOC) between themselves and the Gulf; US presence obviates the need for these nations to acquire blue-water naval forces in order to protect their SLOCs. The credibility of the US commitment was most evident when the US stayed the course in the Persian

Gulf, despite the loss of 37 American lives--USS Stark was attacked by Iraqi air-launched cruise missiles; it was further enhanced with the USS Samuel B. Roberts mining incident. US willingness to take human and material losses, for a purpose not directly linked to US defense, added immeasurably to its position in East Asia.<sup>8</sup>

Another positive outcome of US action in the Gulf was the strengthening of the security relationship between the US and Japan. Japan imports over 99% of its oil; over 70% of it comes from the Persian Gulf.<sup>9</sup> Security of her SLOCs to the Gulf and stability among the Gulf states is, therefore, vital to Japanese security. Since American efforts in the Gulf were to protect Japan's vital interests, it could only strengthen the existing relationship. But, ominously, there is a darker side to the credibility coin. There were many changes in the US that charged that this was another case of a free ride for the Japanese at the expense of the American taxpayer. Charges of a free ride were especially stinging because the critics pointed out that no one benefits more from the US security umbrella than do the Japanese.

One more, and potentially most important, result of the Gulf action was the creation of a set of circumstances that can achieve two important but related objectives. The first is a dramatic demonstration that the US and Japan, and the region as a whole, have common interests outside the region's

notional boundaries. The second was a vivid demonstration that the Japanese need to do more for their own defense.

In a sense, the smaller nations interest is directly related to Japan's vital interest in the Gulf. If Japan feels it needs to increase the size of its military force, at some point the smaller nations will also have to increase theirs in order to counter the Japanese buildup. With respect to Japan, the drawdown of US forces in the Western Pacific highlighted the need for that country to bolster its self defense forces in the areas of maritime operations and air defense; a more capable Japanese force would free the US to reposition its naval forces to protect common interests in the Gulf. Simultaneously, the US would be able to demonstrate that Japanese military improvements were defensive in nature and were not an indication of any hegemonic designs. If handled well, the US would thus get Japan to do more for its own defense, without the usual polemics over trade and market access. The US would also be able to convince the other regional states that Japan was not embarking on an independent expansionist drive.

The exercise of US seapower in the Persian Gulf, therefore, served to strengthen the US position in East Asia in several ways. Little known and less understood by the American public, the US policy in the Gulf was an outstanding

achievement and strengthened the US's ability to accomplish its objectives in the future.

#### THE SOVIET UNION AND THE BALANCE OF POWER

The last year--1989--has seen remarkable change in the domestic political and economic make-up of the Soviet Union. Ownership of private property, rudimentary multi-party democracy, and an almost total rejection of the primacy of the Communist Party in every aspect of Soviet life are in the fore. But these political and social changes do nothing to alter the fact that the Soviet Union is still a superpower in military means and capabilities.<sup>10</sup> The stated "intention" of the Soviet Union to lessen tensions between the East and West has captured the imaginations of the Western Europe, the American public, and apparently the US Congress; all are too ready to believe the 'good intentioned' Soviet actions in the light of purely budgetary reasons. With respect to the United States, a less threatening Soviet Union would allow the nation to cut its military budget, and to use the "peace dividend" for "underfunded" domestic programs.

Domestic pressures to decrease the military budget may require the US to reduce its military presence in East Asia for budgetary rather than strategic reasons. The dilemma, therefore, is whether or not the US should abandon its apparently successful strategy of containment, given only one

uncertain year of nonetheless dramatic changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Deterrence of the Soviet Union requires sizeable, modern and credible military forces.

But as the US reevaluates its strategy it must also realize that "adjusting national policies to match national resources is a prerequisite of sound strategy."<sup>11</sup> There appears to be a growing feeling within the US that the country is not capable of maintaining the military forces it has structured over the past decades. Cuts in the US military, therefore, are almost inevitable, although the scope and scale of the reductions will not be known for some time. Potential cuts must, however, be weighed against the fact that Soviet interests in East Asia are not compatible with US interests and objectives; Soviet economic retrenchment may mean that they will compete more on economic and diplomatic grounds and less in the military arena. If so, the US must strive to use all its policy instruments in concert to achieve its objectives. This will require greater reliance on the economic and diplomatic policy instruments than is now the case.

In the diplomatic arena, the US should be wary of possible Soviet moves to improve relations with Japan. Soviet concessions on the disputed Northern territorial lands could deliver a double blow to US interests in Japan if the US is not well prepared.<sup>12</sup>

Japan and the Soviet Union have yet to sign a peace treaty ending World War II;<sup>13</sup> dispute over the ownership of the four northern territorial islands, which the Soviets seized in the closing days of the war, is the reason the Japanese refuse to sign a peace treaty. Although the USSR has hinted at possible concessions on access, the Japanese will accept nothing less than the return of all four islands. Such a stance, combined with proper timing, could present the Soviets with a real window of diplomatic opportunity *viz-a-viz* the US; it could put the US on the defensive in Japan.

Soviet President Gorbachev is scheduled to make a state visit to Japan in the spring of 1991. There are already speculations about whether or not he will make some "gesture" concerning Japanese claims on the islands. If he chooses to do so, Gorbachev could turn the return of the islands into a diplomatic coup, lessening Japanese fears of the Soviet Union: the removal of Soviet troops from the islands would make direct Soviet military actions against Japan ever more difficult. More importantly, Gorbachev could further undermine the foundation of the US-Japanese relationship.

The US should recognize the dangers inherent in Gorbachev's visit and take positive steps to ensure that he does as little damage as possible to its relationship with Japan. These might include turning down the volume on trade and burdensharing issues, certainly positives from the

Japanese perspective. The US should also recognize that strong rhetoric about burdensharing, the imbalance of trade, and Japanese investment in the US may only serve to make the ground more fertile for Gorbachev in Japan.

Opponents of the US-Japan Security Treaty might use the opportunity to initiate debate on the treaty calling it an unequal treaty which threatens, not enhances, Japanese security. They would likely point out that the US entered into the treaty solely because of Japan's geostrategic position. In 1951, with China lost to the Communists and the war in Korea at a stalemate, Japan was the only remaining toehold for the US in Northeast Asia.<sup>14</sup> Japanese cooperation was, therefore, vital if the US hoped to "contain" the Soviets in the region. Japan and the US, thus, entered into a treaty which guaranteed US access to bases in Japan in exchange for a promise to defend Japan against external aggression: Japan had no such reciprocal obligation to defend the US. Original critics of the treaty argued that it gives the US too much say in Japanese security.

A fracturing of the relationship with Japan would be devastating to the US's ability to use seapower constructively in the region, especially if it were to lose access to the large facility at Subic Bay in the Philippines;<sup>15</sup> it would greatly undermine the ability of the US to accomplish its four regional objectives.

Aircraft carriers and their associated battlegroups are likely to remain the centerpiece of naval presence in the region. Not only do they intimidate the Soviets, but they have the requisite robustness in anti-air and anti-submarine warfare, plus a potent power projection capability. All these qualities will be necessary as the Navy prepares to meet new challenges from small maritime nations which possess state-of-the-art weapons capable of putting any US ship at peril.

Key to the US ability to keep two carriers in the Western Pacific--one in the Western Pacific and one in the Indian Ocean--is the homeporting of one carrier in Japan. USS MIDWAY, the carrier currently stationed in Japan, is scheduled to retire from the active fleet in fiscal year 1991. Replacement of the MIDWAY prior to Gorbachev's visit should be a priority for naval and national planners. If this is not feasible, the US should at least undertake to publicly announce the replacement of MIDWAY with a specific carrier as soon as possible. This will allow the Japanese public to accept the proposed replacement of MIDWAY well before the Soviets have a chance to outflank the US. Any sizeable gap between the departure of MIDWAY and its replacement, combined with Soviet concessions on the Kuriles, might make it impossible to get a replacement carrier into Japan.

Another danger *viz-a-viz* the Soviet threat in Asia is the relative military balance of the two powers. The Soviets

might move ahead of the US in the military balance if it does nothing, while the US unilaterally draws down its forces in response to budgetary pressures.

The upshot of all this is that while there are improvements in the US-USSR relationship, they have not yet been manifest in a reduction of the Soviet's impressive military capabilities in the Far East. In fact, the near-term future may hold more pitfalls than opportunities for the US.

#### THE CONTINENTAL AND MARITIME BALANCES OF POWER

As noted earlier, naval forces are of primary importance in East Asia and the Western Pacific because of the regions geography and size. But they are also important for reasons rooted in the perceptions of the many regional nations about the nature of a maritime balance of power. Their perceptions, and those of the US to a large extent, are markedly different than the traditional notion of continental balance of power. Both the continental and maritime balance of power models are based on models laid down by the British over several hundred years.

Britain's definition of continental balance of power is easy to understand; it has been the cornerstone of British defense strategy since before the time of Elizabeth I, the mid-1500s. The traditional British goal has been to see a diffusion of power in Europe such that no single power, or

consortium of powers, ever comes to dominant the Continent. As a small island nation with inadequate resources to raise and support a sufficiently large army, Britain saw its best first line of defense as a balanced continent. If any power or powers were to come to dominate the continent, they could put Britain at immediate peril. Over time, this strategy led Britain to form many alliances with varying partners in Europe, and generally sided with the weaker of the powers in order to restore an acceptable balance. From the start, its strategy was based on an "ends and means" argument: Britain simply did not have the resources required to support both a large army and a superior navy. Forming partnerships allowed them to concentrate their resources on their navy, for which she had an entirely different definition of acceptable balance of power.

Like her former colony in North America, Britain depended on the seas for both protection and as a means of conducting commerce. This seaborne commerce worked hand-in-glove with the Royal Navy as Britain built up its far-flung global empire.<sup>16</sup> Britain's colonial commerce required a large Royal Navy for protection, which the Royal Navy in turn required this mission to justify its size. Britain learned as early as their victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588 that continental wars could not be won by navies alone, but could be lost

without them. This was, and is, especially true of nations like Britain which depend on unimpeded use of the seas.

A contested maritime balance of power at sea was, therefore, unacceptable; true maritime superiority was the only acceptable objective.

Interestingly enough, the littoral and island nations of East Asia were, and continue to be, supportive of single power maritime superiority. Their acceptance of a monopoly of sea power is of course conditional on whether or not the exercising power is hegemonic or benign. Although colonial, Britain was more of a benign than hegemonic power in East Asia in the late 19th Century. The United States has also been generally considered a benign maritime power in the Pacific since the end of the second world war. In no small way does this contribute to the American position as the acceptable balance of power in East Asia today.

Smaller maritime-oriented nations have been relatively tolerant of a maritime monopoly because their use and access to the seas has gone on undisturbed by the dominating power. It is when the superiority begins to wane that the littoral and island nations start to worry.<sup>17</sup> Competing naval powers arrive on the scene and actively seek to dislodge the prevailing power. This causes the contenders for naval supremacy to seek out support bases for their fleets. These support bases would naturally be located in those areas where

the dominant power had no such bases. Therefore, the struggle for supremacy at sea would spill ashore.

In the minds of small maritime-oriented nations there are three variations of maritime balance of power. The first is not maritime powers present at all; this ideal choice is preferred but quickly abandoned as utopian and unrealistic. The second variation, diffused balance--like the continental model--seems logical, but is generally unacceptable; it results in competition which usually spills ashore and involves parties not originally embroiled in the competition. The preferred variation, therefore, is that there be only a single naval power present, or at least one strong enough to be dominant. This diminishes the chance of combat at sea and, thus, the chance of combat ashore.

Small maritime nations do not generally state such a preference publicly because the argument is entirely self-serving. It is also a relatively sophisticated argument which is difficult to sell to people eager to embrace arms control agreements designed to enhance security and to save scarce resources.

## PERCEPTIONS

### CHAPTER IV

The balance of power can be measured in several ways. Those with large number of forces tend to measure it in a quantitative sense: ships vs ships; planes vs planes; and, tanks vs tanks. The side with the lesser number of forces generally tries to redress his perceptions of the imbalance by seeking particular weapons or tactics, which give him some advantage over a numerically superior force. In US parlance these weapons or tactics are called "force multipliers." For example, the US might try to exploit its lead in electronic warfare or night fighting capabilities by trying to draw its adversary into a situation where it can use these capabilities to its advantage.

But in the multilateral milieu of East Asia the most important way the balance of power is measured is in the perceptions of those whom the balance most affects.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout East Asia in the late 1960s and early 1970s there was a growing perception that US power in the region was waning. The shock of the "Nixon Doctrine" in 1969 and the complete withdrawal from Vietnam gave rise to fears of large-scale US abandonment of its interests in East Asia.<sup>2</sup> The US government proclaimed, however, that it intended on pursuing

its objectives and that it was not in retreat. The hard evidence of the Persian Gulf action should point out, to Asians and Americans alike, that the US is indeed a Pacific power and that it intends to maintain its role as a catalyst for peace and stability.

The US, however, has always had to counter the Asian perception that the region ranked relatively low on the list of US foreign-policy objectives. Charges of being Eurocentrist have been difficult to shake because they have been generally true; it is also true, however, that the US has fought two bloody protracted wars on the Asian mainland since the end of World War II.

The US policy in Asia is similar in some ways to its policy in Europe, but in many important ways it is also very different. In Europe the goal was to deter a Soviet attack on Western Europe. The ultimate deterrent in Europe has been the US nuclear guarantee made almost explicit in the flexible response strategy. Conversely, the goal in East Asia has been to contain the Soviets and to foster a smooth transition to independence and economic viability.

Another perception which the US needs to pay closer attention to concerns its security relationship with Japan. Many Asians have the perception that US talk about burdensharing is really more about burdenshifting: the transfer of a regional military role to the Japanese. If not

effectively countered over time, this perception could lead to a regional arms buildup to counter what is perceived to be Japanese military expansion for its own sake. An effective counter-argument for the US might be the one offered in the Persian Gulf example. That is, the Japanese are increasing their defense capability in order to fill the vacuum created by the departure of US naval forces in order to look after almost everyone's common interests. Once again, the US Navy is the primary building block in the foundation of East Asian security.

#### BRITISH DECLINE IN MARITIME SUPERIORITY

One relevant way to further explore the importance of perceptions is to look at the decline of British seapower in the Far East. Britain was truly the master of the world's seas for most of the 19th Century. By the end of that century, however, the British were facing a dilemma somewhat similar to the one the US is facing today. As Professor Paul Kennedy states it:

The deeper challenges to Britain's naval mastery then did not lie in the numerical strengths (or weaknesses) of its major fleets. . . The more lasting problems for the late Victorian Royal Navy lay elsewhere: in the face of technologically advanced weapons; in the sheer number and geographical spread of the areas which required protection; and, the most ominous trend of all, in the shifting balance of global forces.<sup>3</sup>

Now while this paper does not fully subscribe to Professor Kennedy's economic determinist views, there are striking parallels between the US in 1990 and Britain in 1900.\*

By 1900 the British leadership recognized that it could not afford to perform all the military tasks that defense of the empire demanded. And, events in Europe began to point to a possible war on the Continent. With the rapid rise of Germany, the previously acceptable continental balance of power was shifting and doing so unacceptably. Not only was Germany upsetting the continental balance, but its growing Navy was threatening British maritime supremacy.

Britain faced a dilemma: should she concentrate on the problems on the Continent and home waters, or, should she continue to concentrate on the defense of her far-flung empire. The choice was obvious--the first and most important line of British defense was on the Continent and the naval balance in home waters. In an attempt to do this, and still protect the empire on which so much of her strength and wealth was based, Britain chose a two-pronged approach. One prong was the direct military balance in Europe. The other was a series of diplomatic arrangements designed to protect the imperial status quo. The diplomatic approach was necessary in Asia as Britain had to recall her Far Eastern Squadron to redress the naval balance in home waters. Accordingly, the

British signed a treaty with the Japanese in 1902. This treaty acknowledged Japan's "rights" in northeastern coastal China in exchange for a pledge to patrol the seas of the Far East on Britain's behalf. The treaty was renewed in 1911, despite growing British concerns that Japan was becoming a power capable of challenging British interests in Asia. Britain put these concerns aside, however, because it viewed its withdrawal as temporary; it would return to the Far East as soon as the crisis in Europe was over.

The crisis passed, but not until France, Germany and Britain had fought for four long years, nearly bleeding each other white. Consequently, when Britain wanted to return to Asia, it could not do so for precisely the same reasons it had left in the first place--it could not afford it!

Beginning in the late 19th Century, other important maritime nations in the Pacific, most notably the US and Japan, began to perceive that "British naval mastery" was slipping, despite what England said. The US and Japanese decision to build large navies, and to take charge of their respective seas, came when the British monopoly began to slip--when the warships on the horizon could no longer be counted upon to be British, but might instead be German or French.

Today the situation in East Asia is very similar to the British withdrawal in the early 20th Century: the Asians feel the US does not have the political and economic wherewithal to

stay the dominant power in a region so far away from their own shores. These Asian perceptions of a slip in the US maritime monopoly, therefore, must be countered at every turn. They must be countered by well-thought out sensible arguments and by the maintenance of credible seapower in the region. Asians will choose or not choose to build larger naval forces based on their perceptions of the maritime balance of power, not US pronouncements of what it is.

## PERCEPTIONS AND US FORCE REDUCTIONS

### CHAPTER V

One of the most important aspects of peacetime US naval presence in East Asia is the perception regional states have about US involvement in the area. Because the US is the only great power not physically an integral part of East Asia, it is important that it maintains a sizeable presence in the form a military force. Once again, due to the region's geography and size, the Navy is the service best-suited to provide this presence. Although important, diplomacy, trade and economic policy, security assistance, or other non-military national instruments have been unable to evoke equally positive perceptions about the US. Thus, any sizeable military withdrawal from the region could be, and probably would be, perceived as American abandonment.<sup>1</sup>

The early 1990s are going to be tumultuous years for the US defense budget. On one hand, Congress will accuse the military of not proposing sufficient nor timely cuts. On the other hand, when the military does propose significant cuts, interest groups within Congress or the defense industry (or both) will try to save the programs in question in order to preserve jobs and contracts.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the ability to link strategy to force structure and weapons programs again

will suffer. There will be tough choices to be made in an era of less, rather than more defense dollars: European vs Pacific forces; sealift vs airlift; nuclear vs conventional; plus countless others. The three listed immediately above will have great consequence if the choices are made for budgetary or political rather than strategic reasons.

As mentioned earlier, there will be reluctance in the near term to reduce forces in Europe prior to any formal agreement on the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations; the US and its NATO allies will want to maintain current force levels as an initial negotiating position. This will, most likely, make force reductions in the Pacific theater more feasible in the near term. It would also appear to be politically suicidal for the US to reduce its troop levels unilaterally: this would be tantamount to surrendering 45 years of world leadership the US has worked so hard to maintain. Force reductions in East Asia would also require consultation with US allies--Japan, Korea, the Philippines--in the region. Naval forces, however, could be cut back unilaterally since this would not require consultations. Naval cuts might also be an attractive target because of growing concerns about the trade imbalance with East Asian nations, foreign investment in the US, and the like. This would go along with the growing feeling within the US that its

Asian allies are getting a free security ride at the expense of the US.<sup>3</sup>

Choices between sealift and airlift also present several negative aspects which, if mishandled, could undermine the Navy's position in East Asia. As the defense budget shrinks there will be hard decisions to be made on how to allocate fewer available dollars. If in fact warning time of a Soviet attack on Western Europe has increased from the previous estimate of about two weeks to a revised 30-45 days,<sup>4</sup> then the US may not need to purchase expensive airlift capacity to get forces to Europe within the old ten day standard: sea lift may be adequate to get necessary forces to Europe within the newer and longer timeframe. But this will result in tough choices for the Navy; it will have to choose between sealift and combatant ships and aircraft. Two of the three choices in this dilemma are, therefore, unacceptable for the Navy's presence role in the Western Pacific. But the purchase of new airlift airframes may prove irresistible for two reasons: The present strategic airlift fleet (C-5Bs and C-141Bs) are wearing out more quickly than expected and will probably require replacement in the next decade; and, the new strategic airlifter aircraft, the C-17, is packaged in a 50-plus billion dollar program, involving tens of thousands of jobs, in literally hundreds of congressional districts.

Secondly, the Navy may find it irresistible, as in the past, to pass up the opportunity to buy cruisers and attack submarines instead of sealift ships. But sealift and logistics ships are essential if the Navy is to maintain a large enough force in the Western Pacific to maintain its critical presence, given the possibility of fewer and fewer support facilities in the region.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the choices to be made between nuclear and conventional forces tend to disfavor naval forces used for "presence" and "balance of power" operations in East Asia.

Modernization of the Soviet ballistic missile force will auger for continuation of US strategic modernization programs. The US is simultaneously developing, improving or introducing into operation several strategic nuclear systems. These include the continuing placement of MX missiles into Minuteman III silos at warren AFB in Wyoming; development of a system to support a mobile rail-based MX missile; start of production of a single-warhead 'Midgetman' ICBM, introduction into the fleet of the Trident D5 SLBM; electronic upgrades to the B-1B bomber force; continuing testing, development, and production of the B-2 Stealth bomber; development of a stealth cruise missile; and, continuation of research and development of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) ballistic missile defense system. Deployment of a scaled down SDI is estimated to cost between 55 and 70 billion dollars alone.

While it is doubtful that all these programs will be fully funded, it is likely that at least several will go into full production.

The upshot of this is that there will be difficult choices to be made between nuclear and conventional forces. And, as noted above (and despite official pronouncements about a commitment to maintain maritime superiority), conventional naval forces, including unglamorous but vital sealift and logistics ships, may be one the only forces available to cut in the near term.

Faced with such difficult choices, naval and national planners and strategists will most likely leave allies and friends wondering about US capability to continue its role in the East Asian region over the long haul. At some point the Asians may feel they have to embark on an unwanted, but irresistible, arms buildup in order to counter the perception that US interest is waning: it may parallel the British case a century before--the interest is still there, just not the means to demonstrate it! Worse yet, some Asians may find it necessary to enter into a security arrangement with a stronger power. The choices are unpalatable: China or the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, a country which would be acceptable to US interests, Australia, has so far shunned a larger regional role.

## NON-MILITARY POLICY INSTRUMENTS: POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?

As discussed earlier, forward deployed military forces help to substitute for America's lack of geographic proximity to East Asia. But in a world where trade and economics are beginning to play a more significant role, relative to the military dimension, it has never been more important that the US use all its policy instruments in concert, e.g., trade, used in a negative manner, can undermine the positive aspects of the military dimension.

To expand on this theme, Clyde Prestowitz, a former US trade negotiator, points out the differences in the Japanese and American views of trade. One of the most often made claims about the imbalance of trade is that the US is competing on an "unlevel playing field," that is, playing by different rules. Mr. Prestowitz points out that the two sides are playing by the rules, it's just that they are playing different games. The US is playing baseball (modified free trade) while the Japanese are playing a rougher game of football (restrictive or protectionist trade).<sup>6</sup>

Differences over trade have the potential to undermine the US leadership role in East Asia since it is generally negative in tenor. Often described as a "trade crisis," congressional rhetoric is taking on a more negative and retaliatory tone, whipping up fear of economic doom based on the premise that the Asian nations are taking advantage of

America's generally open market, while not granting reciprocal access to their own. While statistics supporting this claim can be quoted *ad nauseam*, they do not reflect that the Asian market represents an area of America's strongest export growth; volume of US exports to countries like South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan grew between 15% and 50% during the last two years. And, while much of this increase in trade is significant, it is not enough to satisfy some critics. Part of the problem may lie not in protectionist barriers, but the competitiveness of US exportable products. But even here there is improvement. US export of heavy machinery and "hi-tech" products are up. For example, US market penetration in Japan for "that quintessentially Japanese" product, the 35mm camera, is up from 7.7% in 1980 to 46.6% in 1987.<sup>8</sup>

US leaders need to realize that free trade and Asian economic growth is something of a double-edged sword. It is essential that the US be able to compete in the expanding Asian market, but protectionist moves by the Congress to leverage access could backfire and hurt the overall position of the US in the region.

East Asia has a stake in continued economic expansion and access to the US--the world's largest market--is key to this growth. Protectionist US trade policies could undermine this growth and lead to a loss of leadership and influence. Thus there are competing goals in the area of trade: a need for

market access in Asia, but a competing need to proceed slowly and cautiously in order to preserve influence and leadership. A mishandled trade policy would accomplish neither, which would in turn undermine the positive accomplishments of a military presence. Failure to handle this well could also do unknown damage to the increasingly interdependent global economy.

US fear of foreign investment, particularly Japanese, is exacerbating the trade dispute. Almost every large Japanese investment in the US--government Treasury notes, California ski resorts, Rockefeller Center--makes the daily front page. The situation was perhaps best (or worst) captured in 1989 when for all practical purposes it looked to the US public that a Japanese corporation had "rented" a recent US President for two million dollars.

There are similar challenges in the diplomatic dimension. The East Asians are likely to gain more political confidence as they expand economically. They will want to pursue a more independent political and security course relative to the US. Nowhere is this more evident than in Asian perceptions about burdensharing.

East Asian nations generally interpret burdensharing in one or two ways: either as "burden shifting" to make up for US shortfalls in forces, or as pressure to purchase US weapons/day for support costs of stationing US troops to help

offset the imbalance of trade payments. Both of these perceptions will be difficult to overcome since they are partly true. The US should search for more positive ways for the economically better off nations to underwrite security without having to build-up their militaries with US weapons.

There are two other important non-military policy instruments which are useful in helping the US achieve its objectives: security assistance, is used to some extent (but less than it used to be), while arms control is not.<sup>9</sup>

#### SECURITY ASSISTANCE

Security assistance is generally positive since it strengthens military-to-military ties with the US. In the future, however, security assistance may be more difficult to tie to US objectives, particularly burdensharing. From the US view, one the most desired benefits from burdensharing is the sale of US weapons to friends and allies. It positively addresses the balance of trade, preserves leadership in political-military affairs, while increasing individual nations' military capabilities.

But as the cost of weapons soars, many smaller nations may find it difficult, if not impossible, to purchase the needed quantities of weapons necessary to meet their requirements: fifty million dollar fighters or maritime patrol aircraft may be unaffordable. and given the budget crisis, the

US will probably procure a smaller variety of weapons, which means the weapons will have to be more capable, thus further driving up unit costs. One way to offset the purchase costs is to subsidize their purchase by foreign nations. The result, however, is a smoke and mirror reduction of the trade surplus funded by the American taxpayer. The other option is to allow co-production of some of the weapons. But because most of the new weapons, especially aircraft, involve sensitive technology and manufacturing processes, the Congress and the Department of Defense will want to restrict any co-production agreements. Witness the great public and congressional concern over the FS-X program with the Japanese.<sup>10</sup> It produced some of the most blazing anti-Japanese rhetoric on the floor of Congress in recent memory.

The high cost of US weapons, with little hope of cost sharing co-production or subsidized purchases, may, therefore, drive the Asians to purchase weapons from other sources which specifically produce for the export market. These include Britain, France, the Soviet Union, Sweden, Germany, and Brazil.

The result is that the high cost of US weapons may exclude the US from this economically and politically profitable market. This would not be immediately damaging to the US in East Asia, but over time could gradually erode US political and military leadership.

## ARMS CONTROL

Mention naval arms control and almost every naval officer will say that naval arms control will never come to pass. Pressed further, most cannot identify more than one or two naval arms control issues.<sup>11</sup> Overall, arms control is seen as a desirable goal for two reasons: it can enhance security while saving money.

In the naval realm, arms control is, however, generally viewed in a negative light because it would undermine US maritime superiority, based on the notion of what constitutes an acceptable maritime balance of power. But there may be ways to approach naval arms control, which would not only enhance US and Asian security, but at the same time save precious dollars.

With regard to the Navy in East Asia and the Western Pacific, there are three factors which argue for no naval arms control. These are primarily based on the bilateral nature of US relations in the area, the regional states's acceptance of US maritime superiority, and the need for a large fleet to support a rotational deployment scheme. There is also one factor which, despite the foregoing arguments, may make naval arms control inevitable--the linkage to conventional arms cuts in Europe.

The Soviets have tried for decades to engage the US in naval arms control discussions. The Americans have always refused to even discuss the matter; the rationale has been a rather stock explanation that the US, as an island nation, depends on the seas for protection and commerce. A large Navy, therefore, is needed to protect American shores and commerce. In the American strategy of forward defense, a large navy has enabled the US to extend its maritime "front lines almost to the enemy's shores.

The changing security environment in Europe, however, may change this entrenched American stance on naval arms control. The US and Soviet Union, and their respective allies, are expected to sign (in the summer of 1990) the first of at least two agreements to reduce conventional forces in Europe. The Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations, are an outgrowth of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) talks, which had been stalled for nearly two decades over the issue of troop strengths in Europe. The West argued that the Soviet Union had far more troops in Central Europe than the Soviets admitted to having. The Soviets had a tremendous advantage in troop strength and were unwilling to negotiate away this advantage by accepting Western figures. Recently, however, the Soviets have admitted, in the CFE context, that they have a numerical advantage and have volunteered to undertake "asymmetrical" reductions to bring about parity.

They have warned (threatened), however, that the price for their willingness to surrender their numerical advantage is a cutback in US naval forces, a likewise "asymmetrical" reduction of a US advantage.

The Soviets tend to employ their navy in a more defensive role than do the Americans, claiming the Navy is configured to protect the "motherland" and the ballistic missile submarine force, which operate in bastions close to home waters.

Conversely, the US Navy is more configured for offensive combat operations at sea, including an "offensive defense" carried out as far forward as possible. With the US now concerned that the USSR may refuse to sign a follow-on CFE agreement unless there is a naval component to the treaty, it is not surprising that the Soviets demand the US be willing to go *quid pro quo* in this arrangement, given the nature of each nation's individual superiority. Marshall Akhromeyev, former Chief of the Soviet General Staff and current military advisor to President Gorbachev, has threatened that:

Reaching final agreement on radical cuts of armed forces in Europe and making them defensively oriented would remain in doubt without initiating the talks on naval cuts. . . I do not think that signing and implementing that treaty (CFE) would be possible without resolution of the naval cuts problem.<sup>12</sup>

Admiral Charles Larson, the Commander in Chief of the US Pacific Fleet and previously the Deputy CNO for Plans, Policy, and Operations, has recognized the dangers inherent in the potential threat:

The Soviets will continue to hammer away at the theme that elimination of their asymmetrical advantages in ground forces in Eastern Europe must be reciprocated by elimination of NATO advantages, which, according the Soviets, lie in naval and air power. This is seductive logic, which appeals to those who have not thought through the potential consequences of agreement to this rationale.<sup>13</sup>

One of the consequences of such a naval arms control agreement could be a diminished ability to maintain an adequate and credible naval presence in the Western Pacific. Besides the presence mission, the Navy has to also ensure it can accomplish its other deterrent and wartime missions. These include: control the seas in wartime; maintain fleet balance; reduce the chance of inadvertent or unwanted conflict; and, guarantee its ability to respond to Soviet Actions.<sup>14</sup>

The Navy must preserve these capabilities at all cost. It may be impossible, however, to prevent any discussions on naval arms control. The political pressure from European allies (and from Congress) may be too strong to resist if the US wishes to retain its leadership role in the NATO alliance, especially if the Soviets make good on their threat to hold the CFE agreement hostage to the implementation of a naval

option. Commenting further, Admiral Larson saw such an eventuality when he said:

The US will continue to require maritime strength. . . This does not necessarily imply that the Navy must remain forever excluded from the arms control process. It simply means that any agreement we sign must not imperil these required objectives.<sup>13</sup>

In order to be fully prepared for potential naval arms control discussions, the US Navy should conduct a detailed assessment of how to respond to various proposed naval arms control initiatives. This assessment needs to factor in all possible proposals as well as the political or public attractiveness the individual proposals might have. Two examples are worth noting. The first is the logic behind the maritime balance of power theory and the second is representative of the range of proposals, which the public and perhaps US allies, might find attractive.

The maritime balance of power--maritime monopoly--theory is a self-serving argument. It would be a tough sell to a public eager for security enhancement and money-saving arms control agreements. It is probably not viable based strictly on its own merits. It is, however, plausible when put into a broader context of regional and global security. As earlier discussion pointed out, public perceptions will be the most important factor in arms control. An agreement has only to be perceived as beneficial to be acceptable. The maritime balance of power argument will need to be clearly articulated

in concert with other well-thought out foreign and economic policies. The arguments must not appear to be unilateral ones, but ones which have a wide spectrum of foreign support. This, too, could backfire as the Asian-based arguments would also appear--which they are--to be self-serving; the US must avoid any arguments which make it appear the US is unilaterally protecting Asians with little assistance from regional states. The government must first "sell" its arguments on Capital Hill, where sentiments like Rep. Patricia Schroeder's are not uncommon. Lecturing the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Rep. Schroeder commented "we continue to provide territorial and sea lane defense for Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and other Asian countries while they kick us in the teeth on trade".<sup>16</sup>

The range of proposals which the Soviets might put forth will fall into three broad categories: limits on inventories; restrictions or limits on deployments; and, confidence building measures (CBMs).

Limits on inventories could be either quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative limitations would be proposed as part of a fairness doctrine, that is, if the Soviets make asymmetric reductions in ground troops in Europe, it is only fair that the US take asymmetrical cuts in naval forces. Qualitative limitations would deal with specific restrictions on things like sea-launched cruise missiles, in which the US

has a numerical and technological advantage. Qualitative limitations would also be linked to deployment limitations. This latter category would include the now-familiar proposals for nuclear-free zones, carrier and anti-submarine warfare exclusion zones, and stand-off zones, among others. The final category, CBMs, generally entails formal agreements to make both parties "more comfortable with the military activity of the other side." The US in-place Navy-Soviet Navy Incidents at Sea Agreement is such an example.<sup>17</sup>

Within these categories are a whole range of proposals which serve a more political than military purpose. For example, a notional proposal for a global ban on nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) might prove attractive to some allies, like Britain. SSNs are tremendously expensive and are beyond the financial reach of most nations, with the exception of the US, Soviet Union, France, Britain and a few others. For example, the projected unit cost of the new SSN-21 Seawolf is in excess of one billion dollars.<sup>18</sup> Even anti-submarine warfare in the US, given the increased stealthiness of submarines, may become prohibitively expensive. A ban on SSNs might save vast sums of money for navies which are ASW-oriented, such as Britain and the Netherlands. ASW might just start to sound like that old saying which proclaims a boat (ASW) is nothing more than a hole in the water into which one throws money.

Operationally unsound for current US Navy requirements, such a proposal might have some political support within NATO. Perhaps far-fetched, but such a proposal would present a real dilemma for the US: preserve political leadership in NATO in exchange for giving up or cutting back SSNs; or sacrifice NATO leadership for operational reasons.

The Navy can approach arms control from two directions. The first would make any cuts appear in a negative light while the other would present a truer picture of how naval arms control could enhance US and global security.

The first method would be to start with current force structure as the baseline. Using this method, any naval arms control would appear to be a diminishment of inventory or capability, and therefore grounds for resistance.

The other, and recommended, approach would be zero-basing to determine required force levels. Such an approach would begin with an updated strategic analysis of what roles and missions the Navy is required to fulfill, move on to formal alliance commitments, and then determine the forces necessary to accomplish wartime missions. This type of quantitative approach would represent an attempt to prevent inventory from driving requirements and could be the basis for real savings in force structure.

From an organizational standpoint, the zero-based approach would pose many tough questions about assumptions

that appear to drive acquisition strategies. For example, what is the basis for the "requirement" for 100 attack submarines? A zero-based approach could not, however, be done without a new "national" strategic analysis which incorporates all the military and nonmilitary policymakers.

From the standpoint of forces necessary for credible presence in the Western Pacific, a zero-based approach could result in a force structure insufficient to meet the presence "requirement." This would be an even tougher "sell" for Navy leadership than the maritime monopoly/balance of power argument--how to justify peacetime forces in excess of military mission requirements, assuming that such forces are necessary in preserving stability and the balance of power.

In sum, arms control is a mystery to most naval officers and is viewed as a subject to be avoided at all costs. But this will not prevent it from coming to pass. The Navy should, therefore, conduct a detailed study of its implications and look for ways to implement it in a manner which would enhance national security rather than approaching it from a purely negative standpoint.

#### POLICY COORDINATION

Maintaining the balance of power is but shorthand for preserving the status quo. From US eyes, the status quo in the Far East is worth maintaining, with some marginal changes

in areas like trade and economic policy. But the nations of the Far East are interested in altering the *status quo* more in their favor in the economic and trade dimensions. The difficult quest for US strategists, therefore, is to map out a strategy which reasonably meets both the expectations of the US and the nations with whom it deals in the region. This requires an artful use of all the policy instruments at hand.

The preceding sections argued that the policy instruments are not being used in concert, but rather in a way which undermines the positive position of the US in the region. The US objectives, or "means," are being achieved daily; they are, however, more difficult to achieve when the US uses one policy instrument, trade, for example, in a way which causes tensions between good friends, like the US and Japan. The US strategist must recognize that now, more than ever, there is no such thing as the *status quo*: the world is changing almost faster than we can change with it. This will require that the US strategy be tailored more to accept and exploit change in a manner that will still attain achievement of the four basic objectives. It needs, for example, to recognize that smaller nations not involved in a bilateral struggle with another superpower probably define their national interests in entirely different ways than does the US. They probably define it more in economic terms than in comparing orders of battle.

Neither the military alone, or other non-military policy instruments, will be sufficient to realize US objectives. They must be used in concert or the US will unwittingly remove itself from a position of accepted leadership in the world's fastest growing economic region.

## CONCLUSIONS

### CHAPTER VI

The world of 1990 is far different than that of 1945, 1975, or even 1989. The global and regional strategic picture appears to be changing. The American public perceives that much of the Soviet threat has gone away, or is at least receding: they seem more concerned with the budget deficit, the trade imbalance, and even the environment, than they do about the fading "Cold War." New solutions to world security problems will be needed not because the old ones didn't work, but because the questions being asked are different. Today, instead of asking "how much is enough," the domestic public is asking "how much is too much?"

The questions for US strategists dealing with East Asia are just the opposite. Given that force reductions are inevitable, the strategist should be asking "how much is enough" to ensure the continued attainment of America's four basic objectives.

Statements like those of Rep. Schroeder cited earlier only deal with one side of a multi-sided picture--she views that the US pays for Asian defense and gets nothing in return. This type of perception is shortsighted and does not pay

adequate attention to overall US strategy, or, more importantly, its positive results.

#### US POLICY INSTRUMENTS IN CONCERT

US strategists must recognize that the strategic situation has changed and that US strategy must be adjusted accordingly. More than ever it must encompass not only the military--particularly sea power--as a policy instrument, but also trade and economic policy, security assistance and arms control. These all must be used in concert because no single policy instrument can continue to achieve the four basic US objectives in the East Asian region.

#### A STRONG NAVAL PRESENCE

Naval forces forward deployed to the Western Pacific and East Asia are the earnest of US political involvement in East Asian security affairs. They keep regional differences in check, obviate the need for East Asian nations to build up larger naval and military forces, prevent external events from upsetting the balance of power in the region, and continue to deter the Soviet Union from "adventurism." Any significant reduction in naval force levels would undermine the US leadership role in the region.

## ARTICULATION OF US POLICY AND STRATEGY

Although the US has consistently pursued the same strategy in East Asia for nearly a century, the US public has focused more on the US-USSR global competition. Public support for sustained naval presence in East Asia will require careful articulation of the strategy. The Congress and the public may initially reject the strategy because previous force structure justification was couched in the context of deterrence and containment of the Soviet Union. The US should embark on articulating the strategy now and should do so at the highest levels of government.

## RHETORIC ON TRADE AND BURDENSHARING

Trade, economic, and military policies should be coordinated within the US government. US trade negotiators statements about trade reaching a crisis will only increase the calls from Congress for more burdensharing. This may undermine the positive results of US military presence. The government should better coordinate its statements and efforts to resolve various bilateral differences. In this regard, the US strategy to achieve its four historical objectives, as well as what the objectives are themselves, need to better articulated within the government itself.

With regard to trade imbalance, the US should look at trade and not absolute numbers. For example, the trade imbalance with Japan fell from 57 billion to 49 billion dollars from 1988 to 1989. This is a reduction of over 14% in only one year. There is a limit to how much pressure countries like Japan and South Korea will be able to take on trade and economic issues. Further, "unnecessary" friction will only undermine the overall US strategy.

#### SOVIET DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES

The US should be prepared for aggressive Soviet diplomatic efforts in East Asia, particularly those directed at Japan. Plans to replace USS MIDWAY should be made public as soon as possible. The US government should also recognize that continued polemics on trade and burdensharing will only make Japan, and other US allies and friends, more fertile ground for successful diplomatic initiatives: any Soviet gains in diplomacy will come at US expense.

#### POSITIVE NAVAL ARMS CONTROL

No one can say with absolute confidence that naval arms control will not come to pass. There will be great pressure for naval arms control talks in the international arena: the combination of two or more pressure elements could be overwhelming. These are: Soviet/allied pressure; budgetary

pressure, combined with the high cost of naval weaponry; and the perception of a declining threat. The challenge will be to ensure that any negotiated or imposed arms control measures do not undermine US and allied security. The Navy should conduct a detailed assessment of naval arms control issues with a view that some compromise and agreement may be unavoidable. The study should perhaps include a zero-based assessment of required force structure. Every effort should be made to accept minimal cuts or restrictions in order to short-circuit more drastic measures, those more politically than strategically oriented.

#### ASIAN NATIONS IN THE SECURITY PROCESS

The perceptions of the East Asians on the state of the regional balance of power is more important than the US perception. In order to address these Asian perceptions, the US should include them more closely in the full-range of security discussions, including those about threat perceptions, minimum US force or presence required, burdensharing, security and arms control. The most important results of these discussions must be reviewed at the highest level of the US government. This will allow for policy adjustments to ensure that the US strategy remains in focus. It will also assist in policy coordination among governmental departments and agencies.

Such an approach will become absolutely necessary as the nations of East Asia grow politically more confident, based on their new successful economic foundation.

#### UNFOUNDED ASSUMPTIONS

East Asia is a region of many nationalities, cultures, languages and religions. The US should not, therefore, view the region simply as a monolithic bloc of Asian nations. As such, US policy in the region will have to be more sensitive and sophisticated, which will, in turn, require more finesse in its implementation, than those policies designed for an allied Europe. In addition, the US should not 'justify' force structure cuts by 'assuming' it can return to the region when economic times improve or crisis demands. As many contenders to British naval mastery learned, navies take years to build and naval traditions take decades or generations to develop. The British 'assumed' they could return to the Far East after World War I. In fact, they did return, only to begin turning over the keys to the empire after a second world war had been fought.

#### SECURITY ASSISTANCE REASSESSMENT

The US should conduct a long-range study aimed at assessing the future of security assistance in East Asia. The study should focus on whether the US is pricing itself out of

the foreign military sales market, and for what reasons. The US will likely be producing naval weapons which the smaller nations want (fighter and attack aircraft, maritime patrol aircraft, frigates, and submarines) but at prices they cannot afford.

In sum, the 1990s will be a time of great change for the United States as the world moves from a bipolar superpower -- mainly military -- confrontation to a more multipolar world where competition will be judged in other more dimensions. The US needs, therefore, to seriously review its strategy for the future. In the Pacific, US strategy to date has been very successful: the US is in a position of accepted leadership, there is stability, an acceptable balance of power is in place, and the future looks promising. There are, however, clouds coming on the horizon which could undermine the US's ability to continue to do business as usual in the Pacific. The budget crisis and the perception of a waning threat will create great domestic pressures for massive force reductions. In and of themselves, force cuts must be viewed in a positive light. They can be devastating, however, if they are not incorporated within an overall overhauled US strategy.

The costs of maintaining naval and military forces in East Asia and the Western Pacific are high, but acceptable. The alternative costs of having to restore stability, peace,

or the balance of power at some future date appear  
unacceptably higher.

## NOTES

### Chapter I

1. Some of the best examples on Asian feelings can be found in articles written for Western audiences by East Asians. For example, look at several Adelphi Papers dealing with East Asian security. An outstanding example is "The Evolution of Japanese Security Policy," Adelphi Papers, NO. 178, Autumn 1982.

2. Rear Admiral J. R. Hill, Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1986), p. 35.

3. Peter W. Soverel, 'Problems of Sea Power in the Western Pacific As We Approach the Twenty-First Century,' James L. George, ed., Problems of Sea Power As We Approach the Twenty-First Century (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1978), p. 160.

4. James F. McNulty, 'Naval Presence - the Misunderstood Mission,' Naval War College Review, Sept - Oct 1974, 21.

5. Soverel, p. 160.

6. An outstanding example of Asian opinions about the positive aspects of US naval presence can be found in Adelphi Paper no. 152, Conflict and Regional Order in South-east Asia, Winter 1980.

7. These US objectives are those most common which I found in over 25 articles or books which listed US objectives in East Asia and the Western Pacific. Another common objective, but one not listed here, is the pursuit of democracy for all nations in the region.

8. A very thorough recounting of the evolution of the US position at the Washington Disarmament Conference can be found in J. Kenneth McDonald, 'The Washington Conference and the Naval Balance of Power,' John B. Hattendorf and Robert S. Jervis, eds., Maritime Strategy and the Balance of Power, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), pp. 189-213.

### Chapter II

1. See Fortune magazine Special Issue, Fall 1989, for an outstanding survey of East Asian economic facts, figures and issues for the near-term.

2. See in particular Adelphi Paper no. 216, Spring 1987, "East Asia, the West and International Security: Prospects for Peace," pp. 21-31.

3. A working knowledge of 'geostrategy' is paramount to understanding the security issues in East Asia. The geography, that is maritime nature of the theater, and the tremendous size of the area involved make maritime forces of primary importance.

4. Many East Asian nations, particularly those in South-east Asia, feel they are faced with more pressing internal 'insurgency' threats than they are with external ones.

### Chapter III

1. Atsushi Tokinova, "The Japan-US Alliance: A Japanese Perspective," Adelphi Paper, no. 212, Autumn 1986, p. 21.

2. Walt W. Rostow, "The Pacific Basin and National Security," Atlantic Community Quarterly, Fall 1989, p. 157.

3. There is also a latent fear, expressed with increasing frequency, of joint US-Japan hegemony in the region: the US underwrites peace and stability and the Japanese take advantage of it economically.

4. One of the greatest dangers of a massive US withdrawal from the region would be having to return to 'break up' a fight between two friends, e.g., Indonesia and Malaysia, over sea bed resources.

5. US credibility is a major concern among the East Asians. They understand that the US wants to stay in the region, but that it may not be able to afford to in the numbers it is today.

6. A concise but thorough explanation of the maritime balance of power can be found in George H. Quester, "The Non-Aligned States and Arms Control," Edward C. Luck, ed., Arms Control: The Multilateral Alternative (New York: New York University Press, 1983), pp. 126-127.

7. Clyde H. Farnsworth, "Mosbacher Leaves For Tokyo Talks," *The New York Times*, 12 March 1990, p. D1.

8. Domestic support for military operations not perceived to be in the 'direct' interest of the US will be extremely difficult to sustain over any length of time.

9. Bernard K. Gordon, "Wanted: A New Pacific Policy. Pacific Basin: Concept and Challenge. (Washington, D.C.: Center for National Policy, 1986), p. 39.

10. All during the 1980s the US Government has considered the Soviet Union a superpower in military terms alone--not in economics, trade, manufacturing, agriculture, etc.

11. Paul M. Kennedy. *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*. London: The Ashfield Press, 1986, p. xx.

12. All but one of the people whom I interviewed agreed on this point.

13. James F. Giblin. "National Strategies and Japan's Northern Territories," *Naval War College Review*. Winter 1987.

14. Yukio Sato. "The Evolution of Japanese Security Policy," *Adelphi Papers*, no. 178, Autumn 1982, pp. 2-6.

15. The March 19, 1990 *Navy Times* has an article on alternative sites for the Navy in the Pacific if it were to lose Subic Bay. See page 24.

16. Kennedy, pp. xx1-xxv.

17. Quester, p. 126.

#### Chapter IV

1. Sato, p. 33.

2. The Nixon Doctrine stated that the US would aid others in their defense efforts, but that US could not take on the defense of the entire free world. The US would, in the future (post-Vietnam), help in direct defense when it makes a real difference and is considered in our interest.

3. Kennedy, p. xx1.

4. Kennedy, p. xx1-xxv.

## Chapter V

1. There was a strong perception in East Asia in the early 1970s, after the enunciation of the "Nixon Doctrine," that the US was in retreat from the region. This feeling was exacerbated by the complete fall and withdrawal from Vietnam in 1975. Events such as the "Mavaguez incident" helped restore some confidence in the US. Full confidence was not to return until the Reagan military build-up years, commencing in 1981.

2. Witness the current lobbying effort by the Texas and Pennsylvania Congressional delegations (sight of manufacture) and the Bell Aircraft Company to keep the V-22 'Tilt-Rotor' aircraft alive even after it has been dropped from the budget by the Secretary of Defense as being "too expensive."

3. Chalmers Johnson, a US academic expert on Japanese issues, opines that no one is really paying for the "ride"; future American's are paying for the US defense buildup because of the severity of the US budget deficit. See Chalmers Johnson, 'Reflections on the Dilemma of Japanese Defense,' Asian Survey, May 1986, p. 561.

4. Congress may design some sort of formula which would propose % amount of defense cuts as the warning time goes up.

5. Navy Times, p. 24.

6. Clyde W. Prestowitz, *Trading Places: How We Allowed Japan To Take the Lead*, New York: Basic Books, 1989.

7. Clyde H. Farnsworth, 'Mosbacher Leaves for Tokyo Talks,' New York Times, March 12, 1990, D1. Commerce Secretary Mosbacher left for Japan on 11 March, saying he wanted to convey to the Japanese 'a certain sense of urgency about the trade problem.' He further stated 'we (the US) want to make sure we translate very fine rhetoric into activity.'

8. Brink Lindsay, 'Trade Crisis? What Trade Crisis?,' Wall Street Journal, 7 March 1990, p. A8.

9. Security assistance credits may mean less in the future given the spiralling costs of hi-tech weapons.

10. Japanese entry into the commercial aircraft manufacturing market represents one of those dual-edged swords of co-development. The Boeing Aircraft Company provides a good case in point. The B-767 is one of the company's most

successful commercial aircraft; Japanese airlines are the largest single users of this particular aircraft. The Boeing President, speaking at a luncheon I attended, said the reason for this was that a Japanese company subcontracted the work for the B-767 fuselage. Their subcontract, therefore, said the Boeing man, was the main reason for the large sales to Japan. The FS-X deal raised the hackles of some defense industry manufacturers about giving the Japanese technology which would allow them to compete with US airframe manufacturers. Recently, the US engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney signed a co-development/co-production agreement with the Japanese to produce a new engine to power the next generation of commercial aircraft. It will be the world's most powerful commercial engine and, will require the most advanced design and manufacturing techniques. The upshot is, that over a few years the Japanese will have acquired the ability to compete with one of the US's most important export businesses, and will have done so with the help of the very industry with whom they will then compete.

11. In 1984 I was serving, as a Lieutenant, on the staff of the Director, Politico-Military Policy and Current Plans Division on the OPNAV staff. Two subject areas for which I was responsible were conventional arms control and other arms control negotiations which might in some way impact Navy operations. My last fitness report had the following two comments about naval arms control: "First (reporting senior's emphasis) to recognize and sound the alarm over potential dangers to the US Navy in the Soviet Naval arms control proposals, followed by self-initiated efforts to short-circuit these dangers.", and "Frankly, these subjects (arms control) comprise an arcane science of negotiation which most naval officers simply want to ignore."

12. Marshall Akhromeyev, quoted in Roger W. Barnett, Naval Arms Control: One-Way Channel, Unpublished paper, 1989, p. 34.

13. Admiral Charles R. Larson in Barnett, p. 28.

14. Barnett, pp. 24-26.

15. Larson quoted in Barnett, p. 23.

16. Rep. Patricia Schroeder, quoted in William Matthews, Schroeder Wants End to One-Way Relationship with Asia, Navy Times, March 12, 1990, p. 26.

17. Barnett, p. 19.

18. John F. Fitzgerald, "Peace, Deficits Steal Submarine Spotlight," *The Hartford Courant*, 25 February 1990, p. 1.

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